



## TRANSLATING EMERGING LEXICAL INNOVATIONS: NEOLOGISMS IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH AND UZBEK MEDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The proliferation of neologisms in contemporary media discourse reflects ongoing linguistic innovation driven by globalization, digitalization, and sociocultural transformation. These emerging lexical items present significant challenges for translation, particularly between typologically distinct languages such as English and Uzbek. This study investigates how neologisms are rendered in English-Uzbek media texts by focusing on translation shifts rather than fixed strategy categories. A corpus-based approach was employed, analyzing 40 neologisms collected from English-language media sources and their Uzbek equivalents. The analysis reveals that translation processes frequently involve structural, semantic, and pragmatic shifts, rather than direct equivalence. The findings indicate that translators actively reshape meaning through processes such as generalization, explicitation, and cultural substitution. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the degree of shift is influenced by factors such as domain specificity, audience expectations, and the level of institutionalization of the neologism. The research also highlights the role of media as a mediator of linguistic innovation, where translators function as agents of lexical normalization. By integrating corpus-based methods with translation shift theory, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how emerging lexical innovations are negotiated across languages and provides practical insights for translators working in dynamic media environments..*

### Introduction.

Language is inherently dynamic, and its vocabulary evolves continuously to reflect social, technological, and cultural developments. Neologisms, as newly created or newly used lexical items, represent one of the most visible manifestations of this evolution. Recent studies

emphasize that the lexical system of a language is the most flexible and rapidly changing component, adapting to new communicative demands.

In contemporary media discourse, neologisms are particularly prominent due to the fast-paced nature of global communication. Nedelcheva (2023) highlights that neologisms are closely linked to socio-cultural transformation and are particularly visible in contemporary media discourse. [7: 193]

Digital platforms, online journalism, and social media accelerate the creation and dissemination of new words, making them accessible to a global audience within a short time. English, as a dominant international language, generates a significant number of lexical innovations that spread across linguistic boundaries. Uzbek media increasingly incorporates such neologisms, either through borrowing or adaptation. Kukiboyeva (2024) argues that neologisms emerge as a result of communicative necessity and the principle of linguistic economy. [5: 9]

However, translating neologisms presents substantial challenges. Translators must deal not only with lexical gaps but also with semantic ambiguity, stylistic nuances, and cultural specificity. The absence of standardized equivalents often forces translators to make context-dependent decisions. Zhong (2025) emphasizes that translation strategies must remain flexible and context-sensitive rather than rigidly predefined. [8: 157]

The aim of this study is to examine how neologisms are translated in English–Uzbek media texts by focusing on translation shifts, that is, deviations from direct correspondence between source and target texts.

The research questions are:

1. What types of translation shifts occur in rendering neologisms?
2. How do these shifts affect meaning and communication?
3. What patterns can be identified in English–Uzbek media translation?

The hypothesis is that translation of neologisms is characterized primarily by systematic shifts rather than direct equivalence, and that these shifts are influenced by communicative and sociocultural factors.

### **Literature Review.**

The study of neologisms has evolved significantly in recent decades, particularly in response to globalization and technological change. Scholars have emphasized that neologisms are not merely lexical additions but reflections of deeper sociocultural processes. Linguistic innovation is often driven by the need to name new phenomena, especially in rapidly developing domains such as digital technology, economics, and social media.

Recent research highlights that neologisms can be classified according to their formation processes, including derivation, compounding, blending, and borrowing. However, the functional dimension of neologisms has become increasingly important. They often carry ideological, stylistic, and pragmatic meanings that extend beyond their literal definitions.

In translation studies, the concept of equivalence has been widely debated. Contemporary scholars argue that equivalence is rarely achievable in its strict sense, particularly in the case of neologisms. Instead, translation is viewed as a process of transformation involving various types of shifts. These shifts may occur at the lexical, syntactic, or pragmatic level. Huang (2024) emphasizes that neologisms achieve linguistic stability only when

they undergo institutionalization through frequent usage and eventual inclusion in lexicographic resources. [3: 475]

Corpus-based approaches have significantly contributed to this field by enabling researchers to analyze large sets of data and identify patterns in translation behavior. Such approaches emphasize empirical observation rather than prescriptive rules.

Another important perspective is the role of translators as mediators of linguistic change. Translators do not simply transfer meaning; they actively participate in shaping the lexical system of the target language. This is especially evident in media discourse, where translated terms can quickly become standardized and widely used.

Furthermore, globalization has intensified language contact, leading to increased borrowing and hybridization. While borrowing facilitates communication, it also raises questions about linguistic identity and language preservation.

Despite these advances, research on English-Uzbek neologism translation remains limited, particularly from a shift-based perspective. This study aims to address this gap by combining theoretical insights with empirical analysis.

### **Methodology.**

This study adopts a corpus-based and shift-oriented methodology, providing a systematic framework for analyzing neologism translation. Li, Chen, and Kang (2025) argue that corpus-based methodologies enhance the objectivity of translation analysis by identifying recurring patterns that are not immediately observable through intuitive approaches. [6: 189]

### **Data Collection.**

A bilingual corpus was compiled consisting of:

- 20 English media articles;
- 20 Uzbek translations or parallel texts;
- Domains: technology, politics, digital culture, environment;
- Timeframe: 2021–2025.

The selection criteria for neologisms included:

- recency (emergence within the last decade);
- absence or limited presence in traditional dictionaries;
- relevance to media discourse.

A total of 40 neologisms were identified and analyzed.

### **Analytical Framework.**

The analysis is based on translation shift theory, focusing on three main types:

1. Lexical shifts – changes in word form or structure;
2. Semantic shifts – changes in meaning scope or specificity;
3. Pragmatic shifts – changes in tone, function, or communicative effect.

In addition, the study incorporates elements of corpus linguistics, allowing for frequency analysis and pattern identification.

### **Additional Analytical Dimensions.**

To deepen the analysis, the following variables were considered:

- Domain specificity (e.g., technology vs. politics);
- Frequency of usage in Uzbek media;
- Degree of institutionalization (new vs. widely accepted terms);
- Audience accessibility.

**Procedure.**

1. Identification of neologisms in English texts;
2. Extraction of corresponding Uzbek translations;
3. Classification of translation shifts;
4. Quantitative analysis of frequency;
5. Qualitative interpretation of patterns.

This multi-layered methodology ensures both objectivity and interpretive depth.

**Results.**

The findings demonstrate that translation of neologisms involves multiple layers of transformation.

**Lexical Shifts.** Lexical shifts are the most frequent type, involving structural adaptation.

Examples: *“cryptocurrency”* → *“kripto valyuta”* *“biohacking”* → *“bioxakerlik”*.

Analysis: These examples show a combination of borrowing and morphological integration into Uzbek.

**Semantic Shifts.** Semantic shifts involve modification of meaning.

Examples: *“gig economy”* → *“vaqtinchalik ish bozori”*; *“greenwashing”* → *“ekologik aldov”*.

Analysis: The translations often simplify or generalize meaning to enhance comprehension.

**Pragmatic Shifts.** Pragmatic shifts affect tone and communicative function.

Examples: *“doomscrolling”* → *“yomon yangiliklarni uzluksiz o‘qish”*; *“cancel culture”* → *“jamoatchilik tomonidan rad etish”*.

Analysis:

Expressive or culturally loaded meanings are often neutralized.

**Complex (Combined) Shifts.** Some cases involve multiple shifts simultaneously.

Example: *“digital detox”* → *“raqamli texnologiyalardan vaqtincha voz kechish”*

Analysis: This includes lexical, semantic, and pragmatic transformation.

**Frequency Distribution:** lexical shifts → 45%; semantic shifts → 30%; pragmatic shifts → 15%; combined shifts → 10%.

**Discussion.**

The findings confirm that translation of neologisms is a multidimensional process involving structural, semantic, and pragmatic adaptation.

The dominance of lexical shifts reflects the influence of English as a global language. Borrowing allows translators to preserve international terminology while integrating it into Uzbek. However, semantic and pragmatic shifts demonstrate that translation is not limited to form but involves meaning reconstruction. Juwair (2025) notes that rigid equivalence is often ineffective in translating neologisms, as their meanings are unstable and context-dependent. [4: 427]

The study also highlights the role of context. In technical domains, borrowing is more acceptable, while in socially sensitive contexts, adaptation is preferred. This suggests that translation strategies are context-dependent. Al-Saudi (2023) points out that polysemy complicates translation, as a single neologism may carry multiple meanings depending on its contextual usage. [1: 214]

Furthermore, the results indicate that translators act as agents of language development. By introducing and adapting neologisms, they contribute to the evolution of Uzbek vocabulary.

The presence of combined shifts shows that translation strategies often overlap, forming a continuum rather than discrete categories. This supports modern translation theories that emphasize flexibility and functional adequacy. Elejalde (2023) suggests that repeated translation and retranslation processes contribute to the stabilization and standardization of neologisms. [2: 48]

Overall, the study underscores the importance of balancing global influence with local linguistic norms.

### **Conclusion.**

This study examined the translation of neologisms in English-Uzbek media discourse using a corpus-based, shift-oriented approach.

The findings demonstrate that translation involves systematic shifts rather than direct equivalence; lexical adaptation is the most frequent strategy; semantic and pragmatic adjustments are essential.

The study contributes to translation studies by providing a deeper understanding of how emerging lexical innovations are handled in real media contexts.

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